

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
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### **Congress Approves \$4 Million Increase, or 15.7 Percent, in USTR Budget**

Congress has approved a \$4 million budget increase for the office of United States Trade Representative, a 15.7 percent increase that will allow the agency to hire 25 new employees to concentrate on monitoring and enforcing trade agreements and to negotiate further market-opening agreements. As part of its omnibus spending bill approved last Friday, Congress approved the USTR budget, increasing it from \$25.5 million in fiscal year 2000 to \$29.5 million in fiscal year 2001, which began on Oct. 1.

“This budget, the largest in the history of USTR, shows strong Congressional support for the work of our agency and will help it meet an ever-expanding workload,” said U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky. “Our staff members have been stretched to the limit to meet the extraordinary substantive demands placed on them, and without additional resources, they could not have sustained their exploding day-to-day responsibilities. Hiring new career staff will help the agency continue to meet the increasing challenges it will face.”

The agency now has 178 full-time positions, and will hire an additional 25 employees this fiscal year, bringing the total to 203 positions. About half of the new employees will be hired to monitor and enforce U.S. trade agreements, including the historic bilateral agreement on China’s accession to the World Trade Organization; the remainder will conduct substantial ongoing and new negotiations.

In recent years, Congress has given more responsibilities to USTR, which has created higher expectations. And despite a lean budget, USTR has delivered. Since 1993, USTR has negotiated more than 300 separate trade agreements, helped to pass five major pieces of trade legislation and 38 smaller bills, launched more than 100 enforcement actions, and created new institutions and negotiating fora, which together require additional staff resources to manage.

Within this record is a set of signal achievements that have fundamentally changed the world trade environment: NAFTA; the U.S.-Japan Framework Agreement and 39 subsequent market-opening

agreements with Japan; the Uruguay Round that opened world markets and created the World Trade Organization; global high-tech agreements eliminating tariffs on information technology goods, opening world markets for basic telecommunications, doing the same for financial services, and guaranteeing global duty-free cyberspace; the legislation on Africa and the Caribbean Basin; a landmark trade agreement with Vietnam, the U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement, and the agreement on China's accession to the WTO, together with passage of Permanent Normal Trade Relations status this year.